

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
HERITAGE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Animal Abstract

Element Code: ARACF14032

Data Sensitivity: No

CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, DESCRIPTION, RANGE

NAME: *Sceloporus graciosus graciosus*

COMMON NAME: Northern Sagebrush Lizard

SYNONYMS:

FAMILY: Iguanidae

AUTHOR, PLACE OF PUBLICATION: Baird and Girard, 1852.

TYPE LOCALITY: "Valley of the Great Salt Lake [Utah]."

TYPE SPECIMEN: USNM 2877; 4 specimens.

TAXONOMIC UNIQUENESS: Large Genus with some 64 species, 15 species in the United States, and 5 in Arizona. There are 4 subspecies in North America, 1 in Arizona. These are the "blue-bellies".

DESCRIPTION: This is a small species of *Sceloporus*, 4.7-6.5 cm (1.8-2.6 in.) long. Gray or brown above, usually with distinct light and dark dorsolateral stripes on upper sides. Often a black bar on the shoulder. Usually rust in axilla and often on sides of neck and body. Usually no yellow or orange on rear surfaces of limbs. Blue belly patches that do not meet across the abdomen or with blue throat. The dorsal scales are keeled and pointed, but do not greatly overlap, number from 42-53 (avg. 48), and occur between interparietal and rear of thighs. The scales on the posterior surface of the thigh are relatively small and granular. Young have orange on neck, blue markings below subdued or absent. Males have enlarged postanals, swollen tail base. Blue throat with white or pink flecks, but throat patch sometimes absent. Belly patches darker blue than throat, edged with black. In light phase, blue or blue-green flecks appear in dorsal scales. Females have little or no blue below. When breeding, sometimes yellow below and orange may become more vivid on neck and sides.

AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION: Similar to *Sceloporus undulatus* and *Sceloporus slevini*. *S. undulatus* lacks the granular scales on the posterior surface of the thigh and usually has paired blue throat spots (faint in females) rather than a mottled or flecked pattern. *S. slevini* has lateral scales arranged in rows parallel to the dorsal scale rows.

ILLUSTRATIONS: Color drawing (Stebbins 1985: Plate 26)
Color drawing (Stebbins 2003: Plate 30)
Color photo (Behler and King 1979: Plate 377)

TOTAL RANGE: Occurs from north-central Washington southward through the Great Basin Desert to southern Nevada and eastward to western Colorado, northern Arizona, and northwestern New Mexico.

RANGE WITHIN ARIZONA: Northern Arizona with much of its range on the Navajo Nation, to include Coconino, Navajo, and Apache counties.

SPECIES BIOLOGY AND POPULATION TRENDS

BIOLOGY: Diurnal. Primarily terrestrial, but occasionally climb trees and bushes in pursuit of insect prey.

REPRODUCTION: Mating occurs mid-May through mid-June with 1-2 clutches of 2-10 eggs laid by the end of July. Larger females produce larger clutches. Eggs hatch after an incubation period of 44-52 days. Hatchlings first appear at the end of July or beginning of August. They become sexually mature by their second year.

FOOD HABITS: Wide variety of arthropods.

HABITAT: The species is chiefly a ground-dweller, usually found near bushes, brush heaps, logs, or rocks, occasionally in trees. A sagebrush lizard over much of its range, but also occurs in manzanita and ceanothus brushland, pinyon-juniper woodlands, pine and fir forests of canyon bottoms, and boulder fields within oak thickets. *S. graciosus graciosus* are sometimes found abundantly in association with prairie dog towns.

ELEVATION: From 500 – 10,500 ft. (150-3200 m).

PLANT COMMUNITY: The species is found in sagebrush, manzanita and ceanothus brushland, pinyon-juniper woodlands, ponderosa pine-Douglas fir forests, and oak thickets.

POPULATION TRENDS: No known population declines, stable.

SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT STATUS: None (USDI, FWS 1996)
[C2 USDI, FWS 1994]

STATE STATUS: None

OTHER STATUS: [Bureau of Land Management Sensitive
(USDI, BLM 2000, 2005)]

MANAGEMENT FACTORS:

PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN:**SUGGESTED PROJECTS:****LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP:** BIA - Navajo Nation.**SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION****REFERENCES:**

- Behler, J.L. and F.W. King. 1992. The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Reptiles and Amphibians. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York. P. 521.
- Degenhardt, W.G., C.W. Painter, and A.H. Price. 1995. Amphibians and Reptiles of New Mexico. University of New Mexico Press. Albuquerque, NM. Pp. 163-166.
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- Stebbins, R.C. 2003. A Field Guide to Western Reptiles and Amphibians. Third edition. Houghton Mifflin Company. Boston, MA. Pp. 293-294, plate 30.
- USDI, Bureau of Land Management. 2000. BLM Sensitive Species List for Arizona. Information Memorandum No. AZ-2000-018. P. 5.
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- USDI, Fish and Wildlife Service. 1994. Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Animal Candidate and Review for Listing as Endangered or Threatened Species; Proposed Rule. Federal Register 59(219): 58994.
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MAJOR KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS:**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:****Revised:** 2000-09-23 (GLR)

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